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# Illinois Brownfield Initiative: Changing the Illinois Landscape

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*Clocktower reflection in atrium by Illinois Environmental Protection Agency.  
Original drawing of the atrium by Ferry & Associates Architects.*

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency is relocating to a long time industrial site formerly occupied by the Illinois Watch Company and the Sangamo Electric Company. Though the original clocktower still stands, the remainder of the site - idled for 20 years - has been extensively renovated and new buildings, including the atrium, have been added. When complete, the office complex will house 886 government employees. The Illinois EPA leads by example.

## **Rulemaking**

Illinois EPA has adopted rules for its Voluntary Site Remediation Program that are intended to be flexible and responsive to the needs of remediation applicants, their project constraints, and variable site conditions (35 Ill. Adm. Code 740).

Illinois EPA has also adopted rules for the Tiered Approach to Corrective Action Objectives (TACO), a new method for developing remediation objectives for contaminated soil and groundwater in Illinois (35 Ill. Adm. Code 742). By using TACO, site owners and operators may reduce cleanup costs, return more sites to productive use, hasten property redevelopment, and still fully comply with the environmental laws and regulations.

## **Outreach**

Last year, Illinois EPA organized the All-Cities Brownfield Conference to work with local Illinois officials on redeveloping former industrial sites. A second conference is planned for November 1997.

Illinois EPA has created a Site Environmental Information Data System (SEIDS) on the Internet to provide information about properties enrolled in the Site Remediation Program for use by prospective developers. The website address is: [www.epa.state.il.us/data/seids](http://www.epa.state.il.us/data/seids)

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*"The Illinois EPA's positive ongoing interaction with the City of Chicago through its voluntary cleanup program and other functions has been critically important in moving sites in our program through the cleanup process and eventually to redevelopment."*

*Henry Henderson, Commissioner  
Chicago Department of Environment*

## **Financial Incentives**

The Illinois General Assembly recently passed legislation (Public Act 90-123) amending the Environmental Protection Act and the Illinois Income Tax Act to create:

### **1. Brownfields Redevelopment Grant Program for municipalities**

The purpose of the grant program is to encourage transformation of abandoned or underutilized Brownfield sites into positive assets for communities and businesses. Grants will be available to Illinois municipalities on a competitive basis after January 1, 1998 to identify and assess Brownfield sites as well as to develop cleanup objectives and remediation plans.

### **2. Environmental Remediation Tax Credit for businesses**

The tax credit is another financial incentive to cleanup and redevelop Brownfield sites and will be available to any business in Illinois. The credit can be taken against the corporation income tax, equal to 25% of the eligible remediation costs in excess of \$100,000 per site. The \$100,000 threshold does not apply to sites located in an enterprise zone and containing a majority of low to moderate income households.

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*"We recognize the benefits to industry from the Illinois Brownfield Initiative and strongly suggest other states consider Illinois as a model for the development of their Brownfield programs."*

*Bank of America - Chicago*



## **New and Amended Illinois Laws and Regulations Advancing Brownfield Cleanups**

- Environmental Protection Act, Title 17, Site Remediation Program
- Title 35, Illinois Administrative Code, Subtitle G, Part 740, Site Remediation Program
- Environmental Protection Act, Title 16, Petroleum Underground Storage Tanks
- Title 35, Illinois Administrative Code, Subtitle G, Part 731, Underground Storage Tanks, and Part 732, Petroleum Underground Storage Tanks
- Title 35, Illinois Administrative Code, Subtitle G, Part 742, Tiered Approach to Corrective Action Objectives

The environmental regulations for Illinois are available on the Internet by the Illinois Pollution Control Board. The website address is:  
[www.ipcb.state.il.us](http://www.ipcb.state.il.us)

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*“The TACO rules represent an excellent risk based approach. The equations and technical parameters are scientifically sound and widely recognized by industry experts as appropriate.”*

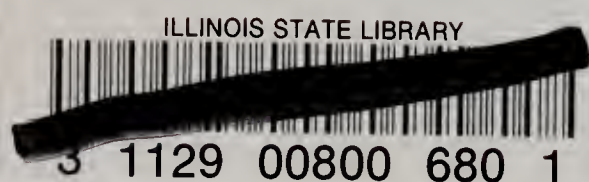
*U.S. EPA, Region 5  
Office of Underground Storage Tanks*

## Listening to the Stakeholders

Four years ago, Illinois EPA surveyed financial and community leaders who make the everyday decisions about cleaning up and redeveloping unused or contaminated properties. We asked them what made them choose greenfield sites over brownfield sites when they were developing new projects or expanding existing businesses.

Although Illinois launched the nation's first voluntary cleanup program in 1989, these stakeholders told us that our successful program was still too rigid and too conservative. We heard their concerns and we began incorporating their suggestions into our state legislation, regulations, and management of our cleanup programs. We are now doing more cleanups cheaper and quicker without sacrificing environmental protection.

On the federal level, Illinois was the first state in the nation to enter into a Superfund Memorandum of Agreement with U.S. EPA, Region 5, establishing Illinois EPA as the lead for CERCLA based cleanups in the state. U.S. EPA recently signed a RCRA Memorandum of Understanding with Illinois EPA to accomplish the same for RCRA based actions.



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*"As a result of our participation in the Illinois EPA's voluntary cleanup program and the successful cleanup of the USX site, we are now in a position to market this world class site for redevelopment."*

USX



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**For More Information about  
Brownfield Site Cleanups:**

The Voluntary Site Remediation Program  
217-782-6760

The Leaking Underground Storage Tank Program  
217-782-6762

The Illinois Brownfield Initiative  
Steve Colantino  
217-785-3497

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency  
Bureau of Land  
Division of Remediation Management  
1021 North Grand Avenue East  
Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276

[www.epa.state.il.us.gov](http://www.epa.state.il.us.gov)

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*"The Agency's constant willingness to work with us and consider CANDO as well as other community action groups as a contributing partner in the Illinois Brownfield Initiative will certainly be a benefit to the citizens of this state."*

*Chicago Association of Neighborhood  
Development Organizations*